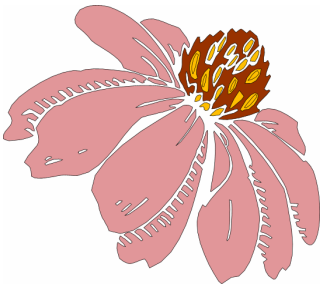
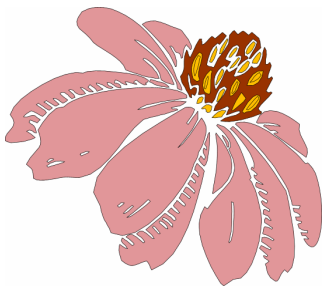


# Summary Volunteer Opportunity for Employees in State Parks

Oct 2010

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## Proposal for

### Minnesota Management & Budget/Employee Insurance Division Encouragement for Employee Participation in Community Fitness Events

Requested by Linda Feltes

#### Proposal

---

Like employees large and small, the State of Minnesota is supportive of a healthy, engaged workforce.

Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB) would like to pilot a planned effort to encourage State of Minnesota employee participation as a team in community fitness events.

Step I: Initially, support would come by way of agencies inviting their employees to join a State of Minnesota Work Well team to participate or volunteer at a selected community fitness event this Fall.

Step II: If successful, MMB will consider encouraging participation in 3-4 key events each year.

#### Outcomes

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- Healthy workforce
- Heightened sense of employee morale, camaraderie and wellbeing
- Positive perception of MN government and its employees
- Strengthened agency wellness programs

#### Logistics

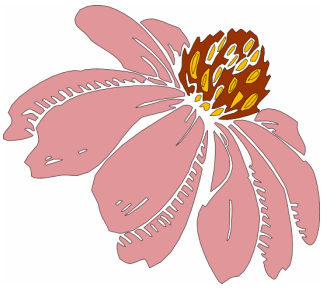
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##### Step I

- Gain proposal approval by MMB leadership
- Understand risk management considerations
- Choose one key Fall 2010 event
- Determine media spokesperson for the state (Recommend being proactive with media.)
- Determine incentive (such as a t-shirt) for participation and how incentive will be funded
- Create communications packet for individual agencies to use to invite State of Minnesota team participation
  - Recommend who the communications will come from: Commissioners/ADDs/Wellness committees/EID
  - Determine logistics, such as meeting place and time, for event
  - Create messages for e-mail, intranet, newsletters
- Before the event, distribute incentives to those who have registered

##### Step II

- Revisit what support state will offer: Incentives? Registration fees? Sponsorship? Etc.
- Develop guidelines for which events to support in 2011
  - Consider a range of group fitness events
  - e.g. 1 walk/1 bike/1 run/1 garden event per year
  - Consider different locations around the state



- Consult with Agency Wellness Champions for events they would like to see the State support
- Back to Step II!

Fall 2010 events to consider

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Arthritis Walk Twin Cities

[letsmovetogether.org](http://letsmovetogether.org)

Minneapolis Bike Tour

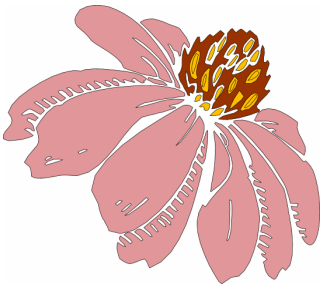
[www.minneapolisbiketour.com](http://www.minneapolisbiketour.com)

St. Paul Bike Classic

<http://www.bikeclassic.org/>

MN DNR volunteer opportunities

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteering/sna/index.html>



## Talking Points

State Employees volunteering and participating in community events

Our mission is to increase state government's capacity to manage and utilize financial, human, information and analytical resources in order to provide exceptional service and value for Minnesota's citizens.

This fall we are piloting coordinating opportunities for state employees to team up as volunteers and participants in community events. Specifically, we are inviting state employees to volunteer together in our state parks for a day in October, under the supervision of DNR staff.

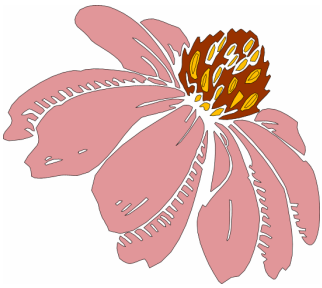
We will evaluate this program and if these opportunities enhance employee wellbeing at low cost to the state, we hope to expand these opportunities in future years.

We know, and research substantiates that healthier employees are more productive and less costly. We support our workforce and hope they serve as role models for others.

We salute the other employers in our state, large and small, who are committed to their employee wellbeing.

Drafted by Linda Feltes

January 16, 2014



## Selection of Parks

Renée Vail, Administrator of Volunteer Programs at DNR, worked with Linda Feltes, Project Manager of Worksite Wellness at MMB, to identify the MN State Parks that were closest to the cities with the highest population of State employees, which are: Metro, St. Cloud, Winona and Duluth.

Renée Vail  
Administrator, DNR Volunteer Programs  
Office of Communication and Outreach  
500 Lafayette Rd, St Paul, MN 55155-4036  
651-259-5249 office 651-297-7388 fax  
[renee.vail@state.mn.us](mailto:renee.vail@state.mn.us)

The state parks were asked to select and staff a project, supply water and fruit/granola bars to participants (reimbursed by Linda and several others out of pocket) and have participants sign a waiver.

The parks selected were:

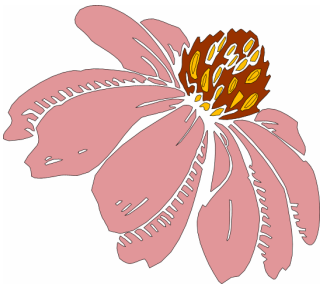
**Afton** State Park (Washington Co) 651-439-5391  
Gene Groebner, Manager  
Rachel Hintzman, Assistant Manager

**Whitewater** State Park (Winona County) 507-932-3007  
Brent Anderson, Manager  
Dave Palmquist, Naturalist

**Wild River** State Park (Chisago County) 651-583-2125  
Paul Kurvers, Manager  
Kacie Carlson, Naturalist

**Lake Maria** State Park (Wright County) 763-878-2325  
Mark Crawford, Manager

**Jay Cooke** State Park (Carlton County) 218-384-4610  
Eunice Luedtke, Manager  
Kris Hiller, Naturalist



## E-mail invitation to State Park managers

**From:** Feltes, Linda H (MMB)

**Sent:** Thursday, August 19, 2010 3:31 PM

**To:** Hintzman, Rachel (DNR); Groebner, Gene R (DNR); Anderson, Brent (DNR); Heimgartner, Roger P (DNR); Samples, Rick (DNR); Kurvers, Paul (DNR); Donais, Shawn M (DNR); Crawford, Mark M (DNR); Luedtke, Eunice E (DNR); Luschen, Mark G (DNR)

**Cc:** Vail, Renee W (DNR); Stedman, Joel L (DNR)

**Subject:** Seed collecting and Wellness

Hi All,

My responsibility is to support the wellness initiatives in all of our state agencies. For example, Colleen Schmitz at DNR attends monthly meetings I convene, to share and bring back ideas from other agencies' wellness programs to the DNR.

My Deputy Commissioner at MMB, Jim Schowalter, offered me the opportunity to devise ways to gather state employees together to participate in charity events. I wrote a proposal (which I have attached, in case you are interested).

The event we decided upon for this fall was to **create teams of state employees to volunteer for the DNR at various state parks**. The parks were chosen because they are close to clusters of state employees, (not to say that all of our state parks aren't amazing).

Renee Vail, DNR's volunteer coordinator, suggested we might gather on a particular morning at various parks around the state to **collect seeds**. Partnering a few of our 50,000 or so state employees with state parks will help with volunteer projects while supporting the health and happiness of MN state employees.

I really can't guess how many people might volunteer, but I will: maybe 15 employees at a park closer to the Twin Cities, where the majority of us work, and 5 at each of the outstate sites?! (Let's see how close my estimates come.)

Who: MN state employees

What: gather to volunteer at specified parks around the state to gather seeds

When: (proposed) **Saturday, October 16, 10 a.m. to noon**

Where: (proposed) Afton, Great River Bluffs, Jay Cooke, Lake Maria, Whitewater and Wild River State Parks

How: under the supervision of state park staff or volunteers, gather seeds for restoration projects

I can take responsibility for recruiting state employees (though your word-of-mouth will always help!). Pretty much you could count on me to do the legwork getting people to the park, and you all take it from there. I also think I will be able to find a budget to provide snacks, beverages and perhaps DNR caps for volunteers. Or maybe state park bumper stickers? Those without park passes—heaven forbid—could buy a day pass or be let in for the day to volunteer?! I'm open to your suggestions!

Please don't hesitate to ask me questions, comment, or let me know if you would like your park to be included.

Note: I am out of the office from Monday Aug 23-Friday Aug 27. Please feel free to talk amongst yourselves and I will check in upon my return.

Respectfully,

Linda H. Feltes MS

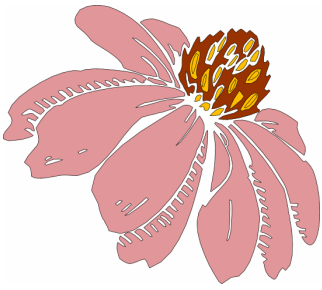
Project Manager-Employee Wellness

State of Minnesota | Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB)

658 Cedar St. | St. Paul | MN | 55155

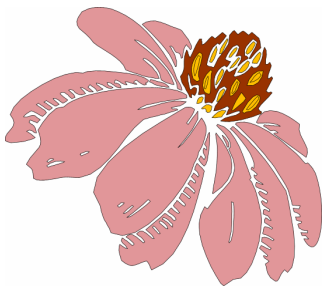
651.259.3779

[linda.feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:linda.feltes@state.mn.us)



*"I help state agencies be healthy, productive places to work"*





## Publicity

This event was promoted through the following three groups:

1. Agency Wellness Champions
2. Deputy Commissioners
3. Assistant Commissioners

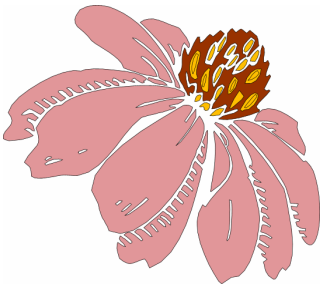
The AWC's were encouraged to communicate to their co-workers, but there is no requirement for them to do so. It is based on their workload and interest. A note to all Deputy Commissioners was sent from MMB's DC, with the letter below attached.

Below are the e-mails sent to each group.

Once a participant RSVPed to Linda Feltes, a reply email directed them to more detail.

One reminder email was sent two days before the event.

Linda created and maintained an Excel spreadsheet for RSVPs.



September 22, 2010

Hello Champions,

At the suggestion of my Deputy Commissioner, Work Well has put together an autumn activity for **all** state employees. I would greatly appreciate your support in promoting this event within your agency.

Five Minnesota state parks are prepared to welcome us on the morning of October 16, to work together with their staff collecting seeds to be transplanted, improving trails and planting trees.

I am excited to offer such a fun, healthy outdoor service project and one that includes our co-workers around the state. The DNR and I worked together to select state parks in counties with large groups of state employees.

Please feel free to use the attached materials to promote the event to your agency's employees over the next few weeks. It would be great to invite wellness contacts in your district offices to be sure to promote this.

By Friday, Sep. 24      Send **Save the Date** via e-mail and/or intranet announcement

By Friday, Oct. 1      Hang **Posters** up in all agency offices (Note: posters must be cut at the bottom, to create tabs, before they are hung. Sorry, but thanks.)

Have **Announcement** posted on agency intranet or e-mailed to all

Employees will **RSVP** directly to me at [Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us).

For employees, complete details can be found at <https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell/index.htm>, click on Current Offerings. I have also attached them here.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or concerns.

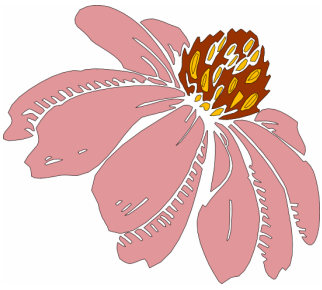
Of course I sincerely invite you to participate as well. (I will be at Afton, though I must say, I have hiked and camped each of these parks and would not be able to choose a favorite.)

My participation goals are humble, but I am hopeful that many find it a rewarding event to share with coworkers, family and friends.

As always, I welcome your feedback. Thank you very much for your support!

Linda Feltes  
[Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us)  
651-259-3779  
September 23, 2010





Dear Deputy Commissioner,

Work Well has organized an autumn activity for all state employees. I would greatly appreciate your support for this volunteer team-building opportunity.

Five Minnesota state parks are prepared to welcome us on the morning of October 16, to work with their staff collecting seeds to be transplanted, improving trails and planting trees.

Information for promoting this event has been sent to agency wellness champions, including a poster, a message for your intranet/e-mail and a timeline. Please support their efforts by encouraging attendance at this event. (For your information, a list of the wellness champions within each agency is attached to the end of this letter.)

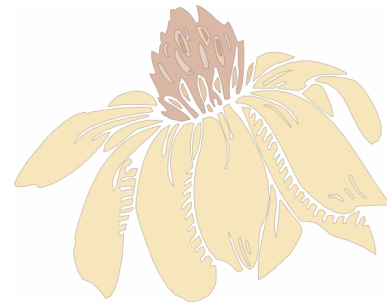
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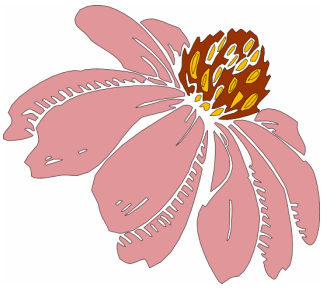
Work Well is excited to offer such a fun, healthy, outdoor service project that includes employees from around the state. (The DNR and I worked together to select state parks in counties with large groups of state employees.) Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or concerns.

Of course, I sincerely invite you to participate as well. My participation goals are humble at this inaugural event, but I am hopeful that many find it a rewarding experience.

Thank you for your support.

Linda Feltes  
[Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us)  
651-259-3779





September 23, 2010

Dear Assistant Commissioner,

Work Well has organized an autumn activity for all state employees. I would greatly appreciate your support for this volunteer team-building opportunity.

Five Minnesota State Parks are prepared to welcome us on the morning of October 16, to work with their staff collecting seeds to be transplanted, improving trails and planting trees.

Information for promoting this event has been sent to agency wellness champions, including a poster, a message for your intranet/e-mail and a timeline. Please support their efforts by encouraging attendance at this event. (For your information, a list of the wellness champions within each agency is attached to the end of this letter.)

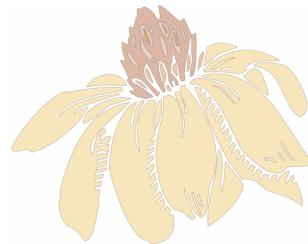
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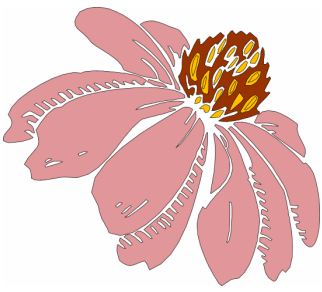
Work Well is excited to offer such a fun, healthy, outdoor service project that includes employees from around the state. (The DNR and I worked together to select state parks in counties with large groups of state employees.) Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or concerns.

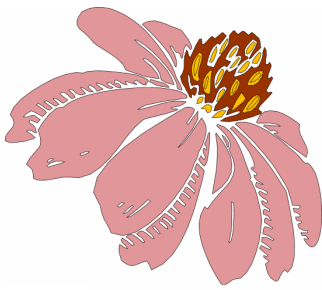
Of course, I sincerely invite you to participate as well. My participation goals are humble at this inaugural event, but I am hopeful that many find it a rewarding experience.

Thank you for your support.

Linda Feltes  
[Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us)  
651-259-3779







Volunteer



Choose a park



RSVP



Sponsored by Work Well

# Be Well VOLUNTEER

State of Minnesota employees,  
Recruit your work team, family and friends to  
**volunteer in a state park.**

**Saturday, October 16**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon**

Afton State Park, Washington County  
Jay Cooke State Park, Carlton County  
Lake Maria State Park, Stearns County  
Whitewater State Park, Winona County  
Wild River State Park, Chisago County

Seed gathering ♦ Trail improvement ♦ Tree planting

**RSVP to: [Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us)**

**Complete details are at**  
**<https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell>**  
**click on Current Offerings**

VOLUNTEER IN A STATE PARK  
<https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell/>  
Current Offerings

VOLUNTEER IN A STATE PARK  
<https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell/>  
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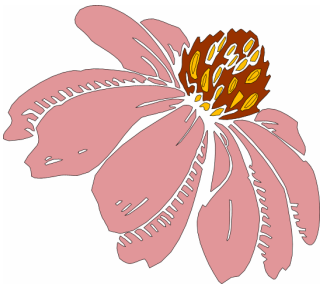
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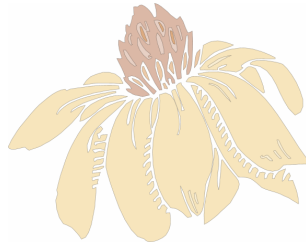
## E-mail or Intranet announcement

### SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, October 16 from 10 am to noon.

Work Well warmly invites you, your coworkers, family and friends to volunteer in one of our amazing Minnesota state parks to collect seeds, improve trails and plant trees.

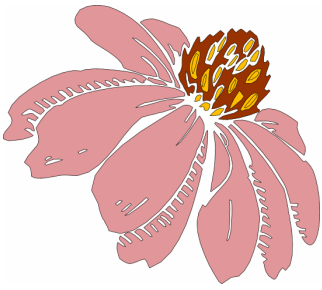
2 hours  
5 state parks  
100s of hands  
1000s seeds



Look for more in the coming weeks!

*Work Well is a health improvement benefit provided for all State of Minnesota employees.*





## E-mail or Intranet announcement

Work Well warmly invites you, your co-workers, family and friends to volunteer together in one of our amazing Minnesota state parks. This promises to be a fun, invigorating morning. We will be collecting seeds, improving trails and planting trees.

2 hours  
5 state parks  
100s of hands  
1000s seeds

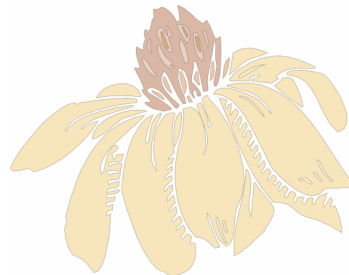
The event is Saturday, October 16 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Participating state parks are:

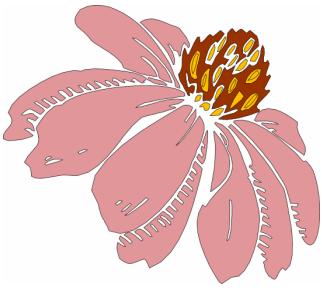
- Afton State Park, Washington County
- Jay Cooke State Park, Carlton County
- Lake Maria State Park, Stearns County
- Whitewater State Park, Winona County
- Wild River State Park, Chisago County

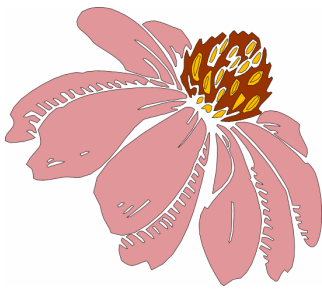
To participate, you must RSVP to [Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us), so the parks can be prepared.

For all the details, please visit Work Well's **Current Offerings** at <https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell/index.htm>









## Be Well Volunteer

### Who

Work Well invites all State of Minnesota employees, family and friends.

### What

Volunteer together in a State Park. Projects include seed gathering, tree planting and trail improvement.

### When

Saturday, October 16  
10 am -- 12:00 noon

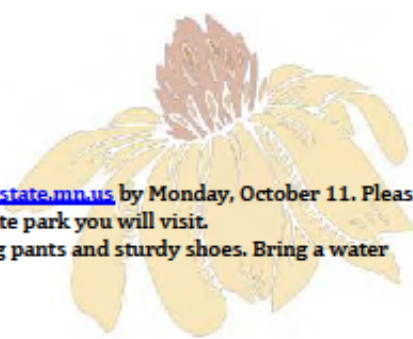
### Where

Choose to volunteer in one of the following state parks:

1. Afton State Park  
Washington County
2. Jay Cooke State Park  
Carlton County
3. Lake Maria State Park  
Stearns County
4. Whitewater State Park  
Winona County
5. Wild River State Park  
Chisago County

### How

- So each park can best prepare, you must RSVP to [Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us) by Monday, October 11. Please provide your name, number of people in your party, and the state park you will visit.
- Wear warm clothing comfortable for outdoors. Please wear long pants and sturdy shoes. Bring a water bottle. Gardening or work gloves are recommended.
- Arrive promptly at 10 a.m.
- Fruit or granola bars and water will be provided.



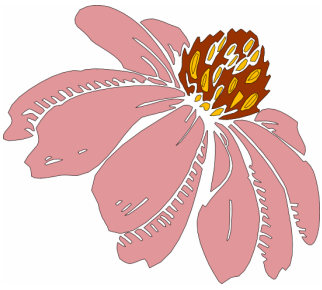
For more information about this event, feel free to contact

Linda Feltes  
Project Manager, Worksite Wellness  
Minnesota Management & Budget  
[Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:Linda.Feltes@state.mn.us)

For directions or more information on your park, visit Explore Minnesota:  
<http://www.exploreminnesota.com/state-parks>

*Work Well is a health improvement benefit provided for all State of Minnesota employees.*





## Response to RSVPs

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Great! I've got you (#) down.

Please be sure to read the details that might help you best prepare:

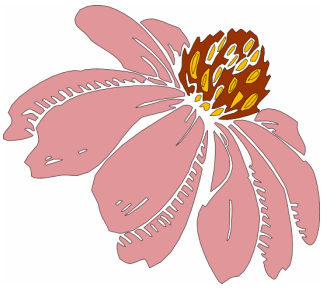
<https://extranet.mmb.state.mn.us/workwell/index.htm>, click on Current Offerings>Volunteer in a State Park

Have a great time.



Linda H. Feltes MS  
Project Manager-Employee Wellness  
State of Minnesota | Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB)  
658 Cedar St. | St. Paul | MN | 55155  
651.259.3779  
[linda.feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:linda.feltes@state.mn.us)

*"I help state agencies be healthy, productive places to work"*



## Reminder E-mail

Hi All,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at a MN State Park this Saturday morning from 10-12.

We expect 115 SoM employees, family and friends at 5 state parks. The forecast is 65 and sunny. Wow!

I wanted to make you aware of three last things:

The park managers and/or naturalists are expecting you! So, when you arrive, simply let the park know you are a state employee volunteering and they will take it from there. They are very accustomed to organizing groups of volunteers and are looking forward to your visit.

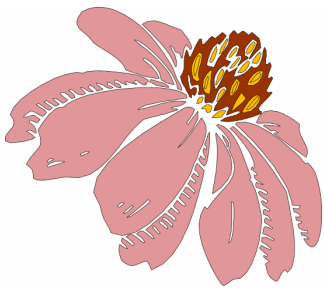
The Department of Health has asked us to be prepared for ticks by using insect repellent and other tick prevention measures. Some of the parks will have some repellent. I recommend bringing your own. I have attached the message from MDH if you would like more information.

My goal for this event is to provide an opportunity for state employees to “go outside and play”. Let your goal be to have fun with family and friends. Be extraverted. And serve the beautiful park as you are able. As Calvin and Hobbes say “...if your knees aren’t green by the end of the day, you ought to seriously reconsider your life”.

Respectfully,

Linda H. Feltes MS  
Project Manager-Employee Wellness  
State of Minnesota | Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB)  
658 Cedar St. | St. Paul | MN | 55155  
651.259.3779  
[linda.feltes@state.mn.us](mailto:linda.feltes@state.mn.us)

*"I help state agencies be healthy, productive places to work"*



## Outcomes by State Park

Fifty-four state employees registered themselves, family and friends, for a total of 112 pre-registrants from across agencies. Twenty-two registered as individuals; the remainder in groups of 2-8. The weather at all parks was clear and 50-60 degrees. Approximately 103 actually participated.

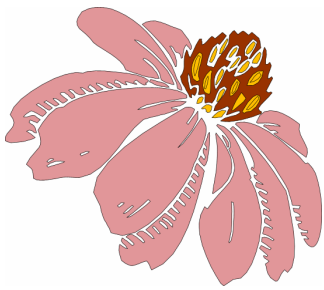
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	<b>Afton</b>	<b>Jay</b>	<b>Lake Maria</b>	<b>Whitewater</b>	<b>Wild</b>	
	<b>seeds</b>	<b>Cooke</b>	<b>trail</b>	<b>trees</b>	<b>River</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>seeds</b>	<b>seeds</b>			<b>seeds</b>	
Registered	56	15	6	11	24	112
Attended	50	16	5	7	25	103

---

After the event, this summary was prepared and placed on the Work Well website so that any state agency might adopt and/or adapt the program features.

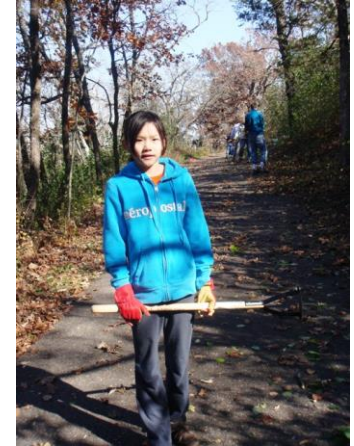
The program will also be featured in the Work Well Mn/DOT newsletter and elsewhere.



## Afton State Park

Fifty six employees, family and friends preregistered, about 50 volunteered

The group was split into 4 teams, each working on a different project: cutting trees, cleaning campgrounds, raking leaves and trimming buckthorn.



### Comments:

*I just wanted you to know that I had an **absolutely SUPER** time helping plant trees at Whitewater State Park on Saturday! It was a gorgeous day and it was fun to meet some other employees from the State.*

*Keep up the good work and I hope to be able to volunteer again!*

*-Barbara*

*Volunteering on Saturday was really fun, thank you for sending out the notice. Hopefully the parks will offer that again.*

*-Alexia*

*Thanks for the opportunity to do volunteer work at the park! My family did enjoy it. Thanks for coordinating the event! Have a great Monday!*

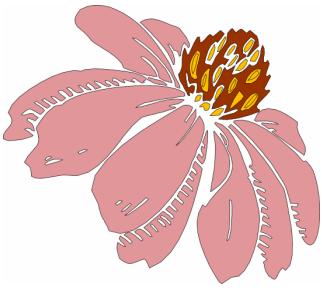
*-Linda*

*Overall it worked pretty well.*

*I'd definitely do it again although probably not on a Saturday in October since those tend to be the busiest of the year with visitors at the park. Beautiful weather, people appreciated the snacks.*

*-Rachel Hintzman  
Assistant Park Manager*





Jay Cooke

To: Linda Feltes  
Project Manager-Worksite Wellness  
MMB

From: Eunice Luedtke  
Park Manager  
Jay Cooke State Park

October 17, 2010

RE: Volunteer in State Parks-Wellness Event

Event went well:

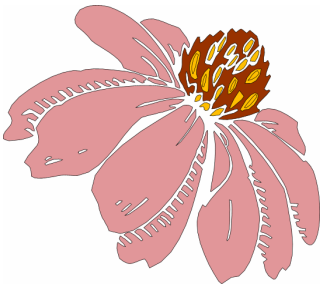
- Sixteen folks participated in collecting rose hips.
- The weather was perfect.
- Volunteers had a great time and are willing to come back to do it again.

Improvements for next year:

- Have it earlier in the fall. We had originally wanted to collect red oak acorns. That is what the park and local forestry station needed to be collected.
- Collecting rose hips was okay. It was easy to do. The resource specialist came up with Plan B.
- Having it earlier in the fall would be better for staffing. The manager was the only one on duty till 9:30am. It was a scramble to get normal duties done, plus get things ready for the volunteers. Fortunately most of the volunteers were familiar with the park. They just needed a map where to go and minimum directions.
- Overall, the event was positive. Folks got outside, some fresh air and exercise. It was a fairly, easy event to do and did not require much preparation or hard physical work.

*The great organization for the event was appreciated.*

*Eunice Luedtke*

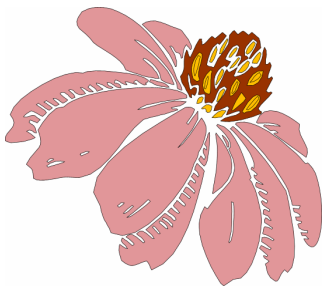


### **Lake Maria**

*Lake Maria had 5 volunteers show up last Saturday. They did a great job brushing out some ski trails in preparation for the winter. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get photos, but we certainly would be interested in hosting future projects. With a small number of volunteers, don't worry about the refreshments....the Friends of Lake Maria were glad to cover the costs. Thanks again for your help in organizing the event.*

*Mark Crawford, Manager*





## Whitewater

*What a beautiful day at Whitewater State Park today. We ended up with 7 state employees that volunteered to plant trees. We had two other volunteer groups as well today at WWSP, a Boy Scout troop and 15 students from St. Mary's University in Winona.*



*I have attached a few pictures to show the work that was done.*



*We did provide apples, oranges, bananas, granola bars and water to the volunteers after they were done. Do not look for a receipt, it is covered.*

*Everyone seemed to have a great time and it was a beautiful day.*

*I do not know if you need an actual list or need to see the waiver but below are the state employees that helped....If you need any more information just let us know.*

*Thank you for putting this event together. It was greatly appreciated.*

*Brent Anderson  
Park Manager  
Whitewater State Park*

*I was one of the state volunteers on Saturday, Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>, helping plant the trees in Gooseberry Glen. Just wanted you to know I had a **SUPER** time and I would gladly volunteer again! Thank you for making my time so worthwhile and memorable! I will have to come back next year and check on "our trees"!*

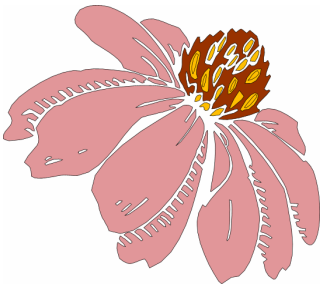
*-Barbara*

*Hi Barbara,*

*Thanks for your nice note! You were an important part of a wonderful group of state employees. I think everyone, including me, had a good time and we did accomplish some important work. I'm thrilled that you would like to help again. I will keep your name and email address for contacting you about future work days. I'm glad you're going to stop by to check on your trees. When you do, stop in at the visitor center and say "Hi".*

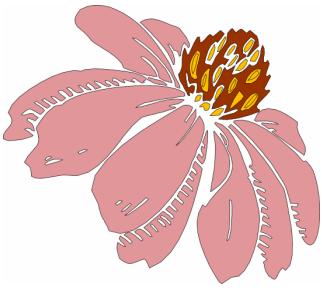
*Thanks again!*





*Dave Palmquist, Naturalist  
Whitewater State Park*





## Wild River

*Thanks, again, for setting us up with such an ambitious group of volunteers this past weekend. Not only did they collect \$2,223 worth of Purple Prairie Clover, White Prairie Clover, and Gray Goldenrod, but I think we have hooked several future volunteers! It was a beautiful day and I think everyone had an enjoyable time.*

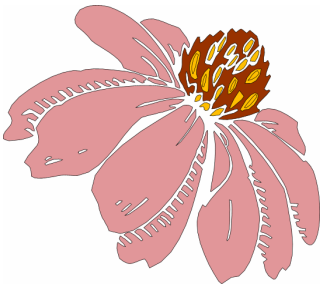
*I have attached:*

*The sign-in roster (we had 25 people out picking, and I'd say 1/3 of them were employees of various divisions and 2/3 were family/friends) Photos from the day! (all talent released, so feel free to use where you'd like!)*

*I also have the liability waivers. Do you want these or are they something I should hold on to for a while?*

*Thanks, again. Have a great week,  
Kacie Carlson  
Wild River State Park*





### Expenses

Fruit and granola bars at 2 parks      \$75  
(3 parks donated snacks)

### Suggested Improvements

- Host program earlier in the year. Most of state park staff is laid off after Labor Day. And it is too late in the season for most seeds to be gathered.
- Communicate program to DNR executive office, as well as MMB executive office, before publicity goes to all.